



Department of State

TELEGRAM

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44
ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 OMB-01 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 IO-13 RSR-01 /119 W

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R 181236Z JUL 73
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3117
INFO AMEMBASSY TALAMBAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: IR, AF

SUBJECT: IRANIAN REACTION TO AFGHAN COUP

REF: TEHRAN 4991

RELATIONSHIP TO:
() CDR
() DOWNGRADABLE TO () SC () C, CDR

SUMMARY: GOI WITHHELD NEWS OF COUP IN KABUL UNTIL 2:00 PM NEWS
BOARDCAST JULY 17 BUT AFTERNOON FARSI LANGUAGE PAPER AND
JULY 18 MORNING PRESS ALL HEADLINE AFGHAN KING'S FALL.
CONSIDERABLE NEWS AND BACKGROUND COVERAGE ON INSIDE PAGES
BUT NO IRANIAN EDITORIAL COMMENT AS YET. VARIOUS MFA OFFICIALS
PROFESS CONCERN OVER EVENTS IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY
WITH REGARD TO POSSIBLE SOVIET INVOLVEMENT AND EFFECTS OF
DAUD'S RETURN TO POWER ON PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS BUT GOI SO
FAR APPEARS TO BE TAKING COUP CALMLY AND ADOPTING A WAIT-AND-
SEE ATTITUDE TOWARDS NEW AFGHAN REGIME. END SUMMARY.

1. IRANIA MEDIA DID NOT BROADCAST NEWS OF AFGHAN COUP
UNTIL 2:00 PM NEW BULLETIN JULY 17, WHICH WAS LARGELY A
REPETITION OF AN ALL INDIA RADIO REPORT. HOWEVER, GOI WAS
INFORMED OF EVENTS IN KABUL AND WORD OF MOUTH CARRIED STORY
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ALL OVER TOWN BY LUNCHTIME. AFTERNOON FARSI LANGUAGE ETTELAAT AND MORNING FARSI, ENGLISH AND FRENCH PAPERS ALL GAVE BANNER HEADLINES TO OVERTHROW OF ZAHIR SHAH. INNER PAGES INCLUDE EXTENSIVE BACKGROUND AND BIOS OF KING AND DAUD BUT NO IRANIAN EDITORIAL COMMENT. THOUGH ALL PRESS IS CONTROLLED, PARTY NEWSPAPER IRAN NOVIN ASSUMED TO ADHERE MOST NEARLY TO STRICT GOVERNMENT LINE. I THEREFORE PROBABLY INDICATIVE OF OFFICIAL SUSPICIONS THAT IRAN NOVIN, ALONG WITH AT LEAST ONE OTHER FARSI LANGUAGE PAPER, HEADLINED FACT THAT COUP ACCOMPLISHED WITH SOVIET ARMS. TEHRAN REMAINS ABUZZ WITH RUMORS SUCH AS QTE ABDUL WALI AND TEN OTHER GENERALS EXECUTED OR LEFTIST STUDENTS PUT TO WORK DIRECTING TRAFFIC IN ABSENCE OF POLICE, ALL OF WHOM ARRESTED UNQTE.

2. PRINCIPAL CONCERN OF VARIOUS MID-LEVEL MFA OFFICIALS, INCLUDING ABBAS HEYDAYAT-VAZIRI, DIRECTOR OF FIFTH POLITICAL DIVISION (SUB-CONTINENT TURKEY AND CYPRUS), NASSER MAJD, DIRECTOR OF NINTH POLITICAL DIVISION (PERSIAN GULF AND OIL) AND HORMOZ CHAMINARA, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DIVISION, IS DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT, IF ANY, OF USSR IN COUP. CONSENSUS IS THAT SOVIETS, EVEN IF UNINVOLVED IN PLANNING, WERE PROBABLY AWARE OF MOVE IN ADVANCE AND WILL CERTAINLY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF RESULTS. IN THIS REGARD KNOWLEDGEABLE BBC CORRESPONDENT JOHN BIERMAN SUSPECTS THAT, GIVEN PARTICIPATION OF YOUNGER OFFICERS AND PRESUMABLY LEFTIST STUDENTS IN COUP, WHOLE AFFAIR MAY END UP FARTHER TO LEFT THAN IS IMMEDIATELY APPARENT.

2. SECONDARY CONCERN OF IRANIAN OFFICIALS IS PROBABLE DELETERIOUS EFFECTS OF DAUD'S TAKEOVER ON AFGHAN-PAKISTAN RELATIONS. HEYDAYAT-VAZIRI NOTED THAT PAK AMBASSADOR SHAH NAWAZ KHAN STATED THAT DAUD'S DECISION TO SINGLE OUT PAK-AFGHAN DIFFERENCES IN HIS FIRST PUBLIC BROADCAST AS WELL AS IN MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLED AMBASSADORS AND CHARGES IN MFA CAN ONLY REOPEN OLD WOUNDS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND ENCOURAGE WALI KHAN IN NWFP.

3. DESPITE A NATURAL CONCERN OVER UPHEAVAL IN A NEIGHBORING COUNTRY, GOI APPEARS TO BE TAKING AFGHAN COUP IN STRIDE AND ACCORDING MFA OFFICIALS HAS ADOPTED SENSIBLE WAIT-AND-SEE POLICY BEFORE MAKING ANY DECISIONS AS TO RECOGNITION OR ATTITUDES TOWARD NEW REGIME.

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COMMENT: LIKE HIS SUBJECTS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, HIM
MUST CERTAINLY VIEW SARDAR DAUD'S COUP AS CONFIRMATION OF
HIS THEORY OF SOVIET GRAND DESIGN TO ENCIRCLE IRAN. HE
WILL PROBABLY ALSO VIEW DAUD'S ASSUMPTION OF POWER AS
POTENTIAL THREAT TO PAKISTAN'S STABILITY AND TERRITORIAL
INTEGRITY. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE WILL MENTION COUP IN
HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT NIXON, PERHAPS IN
ABOVE CONTEXT.
HELMS

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